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# Botanical Bulletin.

Vol. 1.

NOVEMBER, 1875.

No. 1.

OUR OBJECT.—With a good deal of diffidence we present this first copy of the Bulletin to our botanical friends. When the science of Natural History in all its departments has so many able journals devoted to its advancement, it would appear like presumption in us to make what may seem a useless addition to the list. Our aim at present, however, is by no means so lofty, but is simply to afford a convenient and rapid means of communication among botanists. Our little sheet is intended to be devoted to botanical discoveries and observations, and it is hoped that botanists will make use of it. The New England States and New York are well supplied with such means of communication, but we do not doubt that there are many interesting finds and notes west of those States that are only waiting some such opportunity as this to be presented to the botanical world. We do not wish, therefore, to be considered as setting up ourselves against our Eastern friends, but rather as supplementing their good work and aiding them, as far as is in our power, in the discovery of truth, after which we are all striving. We will assure our friends, who desire to make use of this sheet, of a wide circulation among botanists of such notes as they may send us. We shall welcome notes from all botanists and urge them to send us at once such articles as they wish published that they may appear in as early a number as possible. The Bulletin will be published every month and will be enlarged as necessity may demand. Hoping botanists will heartily approve of our undertaking and show their appreciation of our efforts by a contribution of notes, we leave the Bulletin in their hands.—EDITOR.

GENTIANA QUINQUEFLORA, LAM.—In my near neighborhood there is a steep hillside, facing the northwest and partly shaded by trees, where this beautiful gentian grows in great abundance and blooms profusely in the months of September and October. As observed for years past, it exhibits one feature worthy of special note—its diversity in size. Many of the larger plants, more or less branched, with branches usually short and strict, but occasionally elongated and spreading, terminated by cymose clusters of 2-5 flowers, frequently attain a height of full 20 inches. From these it descends by every gradation down to simple dwarfs of scarce 2 inches, which, with their single pair of leaves and 1-2 terminal flowers, remind the botanist of the pretty little alpine of the genus. This diminutive stature cannot result from sterility of soil, which sometimes dwarfs all vegetation, as on the serpentine-barrens of Southeastern Pennsylvania, nor from lack of moisture, for the Lilliputians are scattered amongst the Brobdignagians in such a way as to show that they enjoy just as favorable conditions for development. The cause of their dwarfing may lie in the fact of their later germination, or in the constitution of the plant, or in both. At all events, the diversity should be recorded in the description of the species, and, for its complete representation in the herbarium, all the forms should be collected. We have also some other annuals, which possess the same peculiarity in a marked degree. Prominent amongst them are *Erigeron Canadense*, L., *Lobelia syphilitica*, L., *Campanula Americana*, L., *Specularia perfoliata*, A. DC. and *Mimulus tuteus*, L. The last is a striking example. Along the water-

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courses, high up in the Rocky Mountains, may be found specimens more than a foot tall, laden with flowers, and, beside them, dwarfs of an inch or two, each bearing a single large, yellow flower, exceeding in size all the rest of the plant.—*PROF. THOS. C. PORTER, Easton, Pa.*

**QUERCUS NEAR HANOVER, IND.**—In my botanical tramps this fall I have been very much attracted, and in fact, charmed by the oaks of this neighborhood. For some unaccountable reason these noble trees have never been satisfactorily determined. Many botanists have gone prowling around peering into every imaginable nook and corner for fear some diminutive little member of the vegetable kingdom may escape them, although it may be of no use to any one except a botanist. They never think of looking over their heads and studying the grander works of the plant kingdom, and of learning the names of things not only interesting to themselves but to every intelligent citizen in the land. I have met botanists who had on their tongues' ends the name of every shrub and herb, but who would have been compelled to yield to almost any intelligent farmer's boy if asked to name the trees. With the aid of a botanical friend I determined to give the trees of this region such an overhauling as they had never enjoyed. In the flora of Jefferson county, contained in the Report of the Indiana State Geological Survey for 1870, five *Quercus* were reported for the county. In the list for 1874 the number was increased to six. We are able now to report with certainty nine species of the genus *Quercus* growing within an hour's walk of Hanover and hope to be able to report others from the county. The species are *Quercus alba*, L., *Q. macrocarpa*, Mx., *Q. bicolor*, Willd., *Q. Prinus*, L., var. *acuminata*, Mx., *Q. imbricaria*, Mx., *Q. coccinea*, Wang., *Q. coccinea*, Wang., var. *tinctoria*, Gr., *Q. rubra*, L., *Q. palustris*, DuRoi. *Q. alba* is by far the most common and valuable species. *Q. palustris* is used considerably for making clapboards and is one of the best marked species of the genus. The acorns are much smaller than those of any other of our species, are beautifully striped with paler lines and grow in most wonderful profusion. We noticed a tree upon which they were hanging in perfect clusters. It is reported that *Q. macrocarpa* is used for making shingles but I cannot vouch for the truth of this statement.—*Ed.*

**ASTER NOVÆ-ANGLIÆ, L.**—This large and beautiful Aster is found growing spontaneously in this neighborhood. It sometimes attains a height of eight feet, showing that the conditions of soil and climate are very favorable for its development. I have noted two things about this species that are not mentioned in any description I have seen. The first thing noticed when analyzing the flower was the strong, and to me, offensive odor coming from the heads, especially when bruised. I have been unable to decide what the odor most resembles, and think it must be *sui generis*. It is a little like camphor or turpentine, and probably is a mixture of several strong-smelling hydro-carbons. It is so characteristic that if a head of the plant was brought to me in the dark I could at once pronounce it to be *A. Novæ-Angliæ*. It is a pity that in dried specimens the fragrance is lost. Many plant odors are very characteristic, but are never mentioned because the plants have been described from dried specimens and the discoverer has made no note of the fact. Besides the odor of the plant just mentioned, I call to mind the delightful fragrance of *Coreopsis tripteris*, L., the heads of which exhale most decidedly the odor of mignonette.

The second point noticed in regard to *A. Novæ-Angliæ*, was the wilting and folding in of the rays after sunset. I tried to get some good specimens one evening after sunset but could not find a single head among the hundreds I saw that did not look hopelessly wilted. The next morning they were as bright and fresh as they had ever been. This is one of the finest illustrations of the so-called "sleep of plants" to be seen in this region.—*Ed.*

**NOTES ON CERTAIN SPECIES OF THE GENUS ASPLENIUM.**—This genus of Filices figures somewhat largely here when compared with other genera, not only in its number of species, and their distribution, but also, in general interest. Of the